



NEW YORK CHAPTER
AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS

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MEMORANDUM IN SUPPORT

S.7881 Senator Toby Stavisky

A.8537 Assemblymember Stacey Pheffer Amato

Relates to providing coverage for chest wall reconstruction surgery post-mastectomy.

The American College of Surgeons (ACS), representing more than 5,700 members in New York, has a long history of advocating for and setting standards relating to quality surgical patient care. The New York Chapter ACS supports **S.7881/A.8537** relating to insurance coverage of chest wall reconstruction surgery post-mastectomy.

Breast cancer is one of the most common cancers among women in New York State. According to the New York State Department of Health, over 16,400 women are diagnosed with breast cancer each year.

A mastectomy is the surgical removal of one or both (double mastectomy) breasts and is typically performed to treat breast cancer or in some cases, decrease the risk of breast cancer. More than 100,000 US women undergo some form of mastectomy each year. After breast tissue has been removed, additional work is often required to smooth out and trim any excess skin to restore an optimal chest contour with a clean symmetric incision closure. While most breast cancer patients who forgo traditional breast reconstruction *expect* aesthetic flat reconstruction to be included with mastectomy costs, **the operation is not currently covered under most insurance policies.**

In 1998, the Women's Health and Cancer Rights Act (WHCRA) was passed to require health plans to provide coverage for breast reconstruction and prosthesis, however, the current law fails to specify coverage for chest wall or aesthetic flat reconstruction. **Additional state legislation is needed to ensure coverage for aesthetic flat reconstruction post-mastectomy in New York State.**

The emotional and financial impact of breast cancer and subsequent mastectomies can be devastating, particularly if patients lack access to reconstruction surgery options available in today's healthcare market.

The New York Chapter ACS supports S.7881/A.8537 and urges its enactment.

The New York Chapter of the American College of Surgeons supports S.7881/A.8537, legislation to require coverage and information on chest wall reconstruction surgery after a mastectomy or partial mastectomy.